

Abstract 9:

Revenues and costs of dairy cows with different voluntary waiting periods until first insemination

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Based on modelling studies, a 1-yr calving interval is generally considered optimal from an economic point of view. Recently some dairy farmers are deliberately extending the voluntary waiting period for insemination (VWP) to extend the calving interval, mainly to reduce the frequency of transitions such as dry-off and calving to improve cow health and reduce labor. This study aimed to evaluate yearly revenues, costs, and the net partial cashflow in a randomized control trial for individual cows with a VWP of 50, 125, or 200 days. Revenues and costs were calculated for milk yield, calves, number of inseminations, concentrate and partially mixed ration supply, disease treatments, discarded milk due to disease treatments, and labor (for milking, calving cows, inseminations, and disease treatments). Holstein-Friesian dairy cows (N=153) within one herd were blocked for parity, calving season, and 305-d milk yield, randomly assigned within the blocks to one of 3 VWP (VWP50, VWP125, or VWP200), and monitored from wk 6 post-partum until 6 wk after the next calving. Revenues from milk and costs for roughage and concentrate contributed most to the yearly net partial cashflow. Yearly revenues were greater in VWP50 compared with VWP200 (3,141 vs 2,848 €/cow per year), mainly because of 291 € greater milk revenues. Yearly costs were also greater in VWP50 compared with VWP200 (1,837 vs 1,632 €/cow per year), mainly because of 83 € greater concentrate costs. The VWP did not affect the net partial cashflow per cow per year.